Data Description for Caernarvon Waterfowl Data

General:

The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) conducts three waterfowl surveys each year, one survey during each of the months of January, November, and December. A number of species use Breton Sound as winter habitat, and peak occupancy for most species occurs during these three months. One year's survey data consists of three consecutive months, observations from November and December along with January of the following year. The data set begins with an isolated set of observations from September, 1987. LDWF made September surveys again in 2000, 2002, 2003, and 2004.

LDWF observers fly three north-south transects over Breton Sound in a light aircraft, looking for the presence of thirteen waterfowl species: baldpate, blue-winged teal, canvasback, coots, gadwall, green-winged teal, hooded merganser, mallard, mottled duck, pintail, ring-necked duck, scaup, and shoveler.

One set of observations needs explanation: On 11/04/98, LDWF observers flew transect 26 without observing a single waterfowl. The records for this flight are correct.

Data Column Descriptions:

Date: mm/dd/yyyy

Time: Military (24 hour) time.

Transect Line: Three north-south transects (see Map 200211404.pdf) numbered 25, 26, and 99.

Direction flown: Indicates whether the observers traveled north-to-south or south-to-north.

Waterfowl species: Thirteen waterfowl species, listed above, were counted for each marsh type on each transect line.

Marsh type: Indicates the habitat, classified according to the Chabreck and Linscombe marsh vegetation type, "fresh", "intermediate", "brackish", or "saline". Includes an additional habitat type, "agricultural".

Number Counted: Indicates the number of a given species observed within a given marsh type on a given transect. Null entries are not the same as zeroes. Null entries result when a transect crosses no habitat of a given marsh type. For example, Transect 99 crosses no saline marsh and no agricultural land, so all entries for these marsh types are null for this transect.